

# Book of Saints









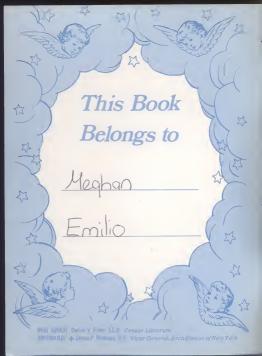












# **Book of Saints**

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"Super-Heroes of God"

By REV. LAWRENCE G. LOVASIK, S.V.D.

Divine Word Missionary

PART 3

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#### Saint Francis De Sales

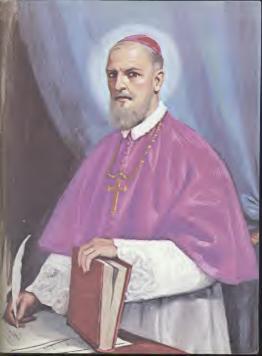
January 24

FRANCIS was born in a castle in France in 1567. When he was baptized, his mother said: "Now, my son, you are the friend of the angels, the brother of Jesus, the temple of the Holy Spirit, and a member of the Church. Now you must belong to God forever."

Francis received Holy Communion as often as he could. He said: "Jesus is the teacher of holiness. I go to Him because I want Him to teach me how to become a saint. Of what use to me is all I learn in school if I do not become holy?"

Francis became a lawyer, but he was inspired to follow Jesus instead. He wanted to go everywhere to look for the poor and the sinners so that he might win them for Jesus.

Francis became a priest and brought many back to God by his preaching and his kindness. Later he became the bishop of Geneva. He wrote many books and is honored as the patron of spiritual writers. He died in 1622.



# Saint Thomas Aquinas

January 28

THOMAS was sent to Naples to study at the Dominican University. After his studies he joined the Dominicans. On his mother's order, Thomas was captured by his brother and kept at home for two years. The Pope called Thomas to Rome to talk to him. He commanded his mother and brothers not to stand in the way of his vocation.

Thomas went back to the Dominicans, who sent him to study in France and Germany. He became a priest and a great teacher. He wrote many books about the teachings of the Catholic Church. Since he was one of the greatest teachers of the Church, he is called Doctor of the Church and Angelic Doctor.

Thomas had a great love for the Blessed Sacrament. While Thomas was praying before a large crucifix, our Lord spoke to him: "Thomas, you have written well of Me. What do you want in return?" Thomas answered: "Lord, I want nothing else but You." He died in the year 1274 at the age of forty-seven. He is the Patron of the Catholic Schools.





### Saint Isidore

May 15

SIDORE was born in Madrid, Spain, in the twelfth century. He was a farmer on the land of a certain wealthy nobleman of Madrid. He never missed daily Mass. The neighbors accused him to his employer of neglecting his work in order to go to Mass, but Isidore said: "I know, Sir, that I am your servant but I have another Master as well, to whom I owe service and obedience."

People tell the story that the employer saw two strangers helping Isidore while he was ploughing. The two men were said to be angels sent by God to share in Isidore's work in return for his attending Mass so faithfully.

Isidore was known for his love for the poor. He brought them food. He also loved animals and took good care of them.

He died on May 15, 1130. The Church honors him as the patron of farmers.

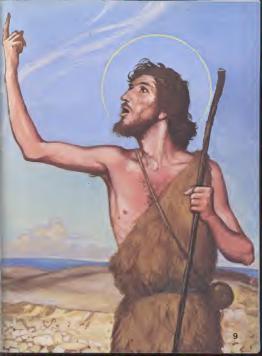
# Saint John The Baptist

June 24

JOHN was the son of the priest Zechariah. His mother was Elizabeth, a cousin of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary came to spend three months with her to help her before the birth of John. The Angel Gabriel foretold the birth of John during a vision of Zechariah in the Temple, and told him that John would prepare the people for the coming of the Savior.

When John was a young man he lived in the desert for years. At the River Jordan he cried out: "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand! I am the voice of one crying in the desert. Make straight the way of the Lord." Large crowds were baptized by him as a sign of penance and forgiveness of sins.

One day John pointed to Jesus with the words, "Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world!" And when John poured water over the head of Jesus in the Jordan River as a sign of penance, the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove, and the heavenly Father said: "This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." King Herod had John beheaded.





#### Saint Benedict

July 11

BENEDICT was born in the year 480 in a noble family of Rome. He went to a town called Subiaco, set on a mountain forty miles from Rome. There he lived in a cave in the side of a cliff for three years. Sometimes a raven brought him food.

People heard about this holy man. Soon more than one hundred and forty monks were living with him in a monastery at Subiaco. They were busy every day praying, clearing the land, planting crops, teaching school, feeding the poor. Benedict's motto was: "Pray and work."

Benedict and his monks built a large monastery on Monte Cassino in Italy on the top of a mountain. It became the home of thousands of monks. Later they went out to teach all through Europe. They were called Benedictines. Today they have monasteries all through the world.

Benedict died near the altar where he received the Blessed Sacrament, while his monks held up his arms in prayer.



# Saint Clare

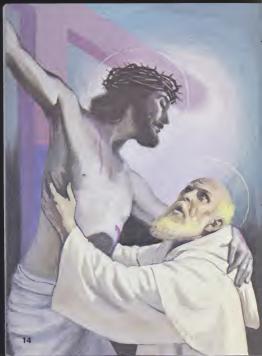
#### August 11

CLARE was the daughter of a count. She heard St. Francis preach in the streets of Assisi and told him of her desire to give herself to God. They became close friends.

Clare refused to marry at 15. At the age of 18 she left her castle with one companion and went to the church of Our Lady of the Angels, where she met Francis and his Brothers. In that poor little church she received a rough woolen habit, exchanged her jeweled belt for a common rope with knots in it, and consecrated her life to God at the altar of Our Lady.

In an old house outside Assisi she started her Order of the Poor Clares. Later, her sister and mother and other noble ladies joined her. They lived a life of prayer, silence, work, and fasting.

One day enemies of the Church were about to attack the convent. The Saint had the Blessed Sacrament placed in a monstrance above the gate of the convent. She prayed for help and the enemy fled. She died in 1253.



#### Saint Bernard

August 20

BERNARD was born in a castle in Burgundy, France. At an early age he was sent to the best schools. He studied theology and Holy Scripture. After his mother's death, at thé age of 16, he left his home to join a monastery of the Cistercian Order. He became a priest. He was sent with twelve monks to start a new monastery called the Abbey of Clairvaux. Bernard was at once appointed abbot.

The poor and the weak sought Bernard's protection; bishops, kings, and popes asked his advice. Pope Eugenius commanded him to preach a crusade through France and Germany.

Bernard founded many monasteries. Though he was very busy he never allowed himself to forget that his main duty in this world was to lead a holy life and to save his soul.

Bernard is known for his writings and has the title of Doctor of Holy Church. He was devoted to Jesus Crucified and the Virgin Mary. He died in the year 1153.

# Saint Augustine

August 28

AUGUSTINE was born in North Africa in 354. His father was a pagan who wanted his son to be a man of learning, and cared little about his character. His mother was St. Monica, who urged her son to lead a good life.

Augustine fell into bad company and read bad books. For thirteen years he led a very evil life. But his mother kept praying for his conversion. One day while he was reading the letters of St. Paul, he made up his mind to become a Christian. His mother's prayers were answered. Augustine became a Christian at 33, a priest at 36, a bishop at 41. He preached often and wrote many books during thirty-five years as bishop of Hippo in North Africa.

Augustine wrote: "Too late have I loved You, O Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! Our hearts were made for You, O Lord, and they are restless until they rest in You."

St. Augustine died in the year 430. He is honored as a Doctor or Teacher of the Church, and a patron of theologians.



#### Saint Charles Borromeo

November 4

CHARLES, of the noble family of Borromeo, was born in 1538 in a castle of Aron, in Italy. When Charles was only twenty-two, Pope Pius made him a cardinal and the archbishop of Milan

Charles was a great teacher and writer. He helped the Church at the time Martin Luther fell away from the Church during the so-called Reformation. His great work was in the Council of Trent. He founded schools for the poor, seminaries for clerics, and through his community of Oblates trained his priests to holiness of life.

Charles also built hospitals where he himself served the sick. He was often seen taking part in public processions with a rope around his neck as a sign of penance. He gave away all he had and wore an old patched cloak. During a great plague, he was ever with the sick and dying. He tried to feed 60,000 poor people everyday.

Charles died at the age of 46 in 1584. He is the patron of seminaries and of those who teach catechism.



#### Saint Frances Cabrini

November 13

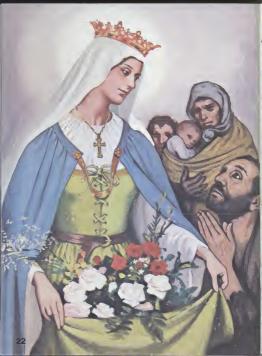
RANCES Cabrini was born in Italy in 1850, one of thirteen children. When she was eighteen years old, poor health kept her from becoming a Sister. She helped her mother and father until their death, and then worked on a farm with her brother and sister.

A priest asked her to teach in a school for girls. She taught for six years. Because a bishop asked her, she started a missionary order in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to care for poor children in schools and hospitals.

Frances wrote to Pope Leo XIII, and he told her: "Go to the United States, my child. There is much work awaiting you there."

She came to the United States with six Sisters in 1889, and began working among the Italian people of New York. She became an American citizen. Mother Cabrini started 67 orphanages, schools, and hospitals in 35 years. She was the first American citizen to become a Saint, July 7, 1946.





#### Saint Elizabeth

November 17

ELIZABETH was the daughter of the king of Hungary. At the age of fourteen she was married to Louis of Thuringia, a German prince, and bore three children.

Under the guidance of a Franciscan friar, she led a life of prayer, sacrifice, and service of the poor and sick. Seeking to become one with the poor, she wore simple clothing. Daily she would take bread to hundreds of the poor in the land. They loved her and called her "Dear St. Elizabeth."

One day Elizabeth was carrying bread for the poor. Her husband met her, and looking under the mantle saw only roses.

After her husband's death Elizabeth was left with four children. Giving her money to the poor, she worked to support her family because she was mistreated by her husband's family. She joined the Third Order of St. Francis, spending the remaining few years of her life caring for the poor in a hospital. She died at the age of twenty-four. She is the patron of hospitals.

### Saint Cecilia

November 22

CECILIA is one of the most famous and most loved of the Roman martyrs. According to legend, she was a young Christian of high rank promised in marriage to a Roman named Valerian. Through her example he was converted, and was martyred along with his brother.

An inscription of the fourth century refers to a church named after her, and her feast was celebrated at least in 545. The legend about her death is very beautiful.

Cecilia refused to sacrifice to the gods. The judge condemned her to be smothered by a steam. But God protected her. Then the judge ordered a soldier to kill her with the sword. He struck her three times, but did not cut off her head. She fell down, badly wounded, and for three days she remained alive. After receiving Holy Communion she died in 117. Cecilia is honored as the patroness of religious music. Like any good Christian, she sang in her heart, and sometimes with her voice. She has become a symbol of the Church's teaching that good music is an important part of the liturgy.





#### Saint Catherine Laboure

November 28

ATHERINE was born in 1806 in Burgundy, France, the ninth of eleven children. She refused many offers of marriage, and said: "I found my Bridegroom on the day of my First Communion. To Him alone have I given myself."

Catherine once paid a visit to a hospital which was in the care of the Sisters of Charity. There she saw a picture of St. Vincent de Paul. His example inspired her to take care of the sick and she later shared in the work of St. Vincent de Paul.

The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Catherine three times and asked her to spread devotion to her Immaculate Conception. She told Catherine to have a medal made, which is called the Miraculous Medal. On one side of the medal are the words: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee," and on the other side the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. This devotion spread throughout the world. Catherine died in 1876.

#### Saint Francis Xavier

December 3

RANCIS was born in 1506 in Spain of noble parents. He was sent to the College of St. Barbara in Paris and became a teacher. He joined St. Ignatius and four other young men who vowed to work for the conversion of souls. They formed the Society of Jesus.

Before his ordination to the priesthood in Venice, he cared for the sick in a hospital. The King of Portugal wanted six missionaries to preach the Faith in India. One of these was Francis. He journeyed to Goa. There he helped the sick and taught catechism in the church. Later he preached in the south of India and converted thousands of pagans.

Francis sailed for Japan in 1549. Other missionaries joined him there. Thousands were brought to the true Faith. While on a ship going to China, he became very ill of a high fever. The ship stopped at an island. He died there in an old cabin on December 2, 1552.

St. Francis Xavier is the patron of the foreign missions. The flaming heart means his great love for God and for souls.





#### Saint John of the Cross

December 14

JOHN was born in Spain in 1542 of very poor parents. At twenty-one he became a lay brother at a Carmelite monastery, but his superiors sent him to study for the priesthood.

After his ordination he met St. Teresa of Avila, who told him to take up the work of making his own Order more faithful to the teaching and example of Christ. He became the first prior of the Discalced or barefoot Carmelites, and took the name of John of the Cross.

John is a saint because his life was spent according to the words of Jesus: "If anyone wishes to follow Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily." Some of his friars cast him into prison. After nine months of suffering he escaped. He wrote: "Live in the world as if only God and your soul were in it; then your heart will never be made captive by any earthly thing."

John died in 1591. Because of his writings on holiness he was declared a Doctor of the Church.



# Our Lady, Queen of All Saints

August 22

AFTER a most holy life and death the Blessed Virgin Mary was gloriously assumed into heaven with soul and body and was crowned Queen of Heaven by her own Son.

All the virtues the Saints practiced are to be found in her in a very wonderful way. She is the Oueen of All Saints.

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